

## **Paper Two: Reflecting and Shaping American Cultures 1750-2500 words**

This paper moves beyond personally exploring one's own culture and asks you to critically analyze various cultures existing within America, but instead of looking at American culture on reality television and talk shows, this paper will allow you to examine other cultural facets of America. You will examine how American culture is reflected and shaped through various legal actions, media formats, and concepts. Your paper will select one of particular facets of American culture—one that closely reveals a part of America's culture. For example, you could explore the increase number of college students who watch John Stewart's Daily Show, and how this television show becomes the main, or only, source of news for this particular group; how does this show impact youth's perception of news? Also, you could examine the ways gas prices or global warming has shaped and continues to shape America's automobile industry. Then you will compose a feature article or exposé in order to reveal how your particular topic defines our overall culture and how do the rhetoric and images surrounding this topic impact one's understanding of it. How do current events and news shape our understanding of American culture? We want to examine what we take for granted in our culture, interrogate it, and bring our discoveries to light in this paper. In order to investigate a particular part of our culture, you will become journalists, freelancers, and authors, writing for the news publication, magazine, or insider program of your choice.

When approaching this topic, you need to look past the simple news story and closely analyze what this specific part of our culture means both to us and the American culture. Like with the first paper, do not summarize but analyze. Find something that engages or troubles you within the American culture.

After finding an interesting topic to analyze, you need to consider who you want to address—who is your audience—as you compose your feature article or exposé. Where might such an article or exposé be published? A feature article informs the reader and engages them in an interesting way, while an exposé exposes some stories or information, uncovering untold truths. Make the topic interesting for the audience; make us want to read it. You need to not only catch the reader's attention but also hold that attention through your choice of language and your tone. Your language and rhetoric become tools for presenting your critical stance of this part of American culture. Think about how writer's rhetoric and your own rhetoric conveys a topic; how do images alter one's perception of culture and how can you also use images to deliver your message.

There is a minimum of 5 sources required to support your 7–10 page article, drawing from a variety of source materials: library books, journals, magazines, newsprint, credible web publications, interviews, etc. Our text, *The Curious Researcher*, will guide us through the steps to researching for your feature article/ exposé and to documenting your sources using MLA format.